

About Amorous Aardvarks

And other neat stuff you'll find on the Web

by Louis A. Arana-Barradas

Got a few minutes to kill before making that big move with the family? Surf the Web.

You'll find all the information you'll need to make it easier to settle into your new home.

Like where the children will go to school. What the weather's like. The parts of town to avoid. Whether people there say "pop," "soda" or "soda pop." You'll even find the deli that sells your favorite brand of liverwurst. Or where to sign up for bassoon lessons.

"Surfing" has become the "opium for the masses" of the computer age. It hooks surfers because it's easy to find information — if you know where to look. All it takes is typing a few words or a click of the mouse. And by current estimates, there are more than a million Web sites. They offer data on everything from analyzing an aardvark's amorous advances to what makes Louisiana zydecos music unique and popular [ask Boozoo Chavis, he knows what that is].

Some Web sites are full of useful information — especially some Air Force Web sites. That's good when you want to know how much money Uncle Sugar's going to pay you for driving your family and household goods from California to Virginia. It's all there on the Web.

The Airman staff picked these as the Top-10 Web sites that support Air Force people:

1. Air Force One Source

www.airforceonesource.com

user ID: *airforce*, password: *ready*

Tons of facts about everyday things Air Force families need. The welcome says it all: "the comprehensive source to help you face life's everyday challenges." There's stuff about taking care of the baby, wills, dealing with spouses returning from deployments — you name it. You can even get an online newsletter delivered. And a huge plus: it's in Spanish, too. **Rating:** Great site.

2. Air Force Crossroads

www.afcrossroads.com

It's all about the family here. There are lots of links to find relocation, finances, employment and spouse networks data. There's a recreation link for Air Force family camp, recreation site and campgrounds, by state or country, so you can call ahead and make a reservation. And there's a Flea Market link for posting "for sale" items; even an online car lot. **Rating:** A family affair.

3. Air Force Portal

www.my.af.mil

"Because information is not enough," this is a must-know site for all Airmen, says the Air Force chief of staff. This is the one-stop shopping site for all things Air Force. From fitness management to recruiting, from travel news to base locations, pay, health, new policy — it's all there. You can even chat to your Airman buddies online. **Rating:** Very official.

4. Defense Department Schools

www.dodea.edu

Going overseas? This is the site for students to take a sneak preview of their new alma mater. They can visit the school Web page and check out the curriculum, school life, activities, sports — including what's for lunch. There are even links to the "dormitory" high schools, like London Central High School. Parents can also find info on home schooling, too. **Rating:** An A+.

AIR FORCE CROSSROADS
THE OFFICIAL COMMUNITY WEBSITE OF THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

The Air Force believes that one of its most important attributes is a sense of community among its members and their families...The Air Force is rededicating itself to both maintaining this sense of community and finding new and more efficient ways of providing it.

Calendar of Events
Casualty & Loss
Communications Center
DoD Installations
Education
Eldercare
Employment / Volunteer
Family Separations
Financial Information
Flea Market
Info. Resource Center
Leisure Activities
Medical & Dental
Parenting
Related Websites
Relocation
Spouse Network
Teens & Youth

Created and maintained by Human Resources Technologies, Inc.
Read the privacy statement.

NEWS FLASH
REGISTER
Join the Air Force

www.afcrossroads.com

5. Air Force Link

www.af.mil

Want to keep up with what's going on around the Air Force? Go no further than this link. All the news fit to cyber print is here. And there are plenty of links to find photos, biographies, fact sheets and details about bases. It's also where to keep up with Air Force policy. You can sign up for the latest news delivered to your computer.

Rating: Scoop it up.

6. Sperling's Best Places

www.bestplaces.net

Neat site. It has up-to-date, need-to-know facts about places Air Force families might move. Highlights communities around the nation, and lists the best places to live, work, retire — even to get a good night's sleep. One link allows you to check out neighborhoods, by Zip code, for crime, housing values and weather— even the amount of ultraviolet radiation.

Rating: Sterling.

7. Hometown USA

www.hometownusa.com/kids/safesites.html

It's all about children. Don't sit around watching television at base billeting. Take the kids to the library and let them surf this site. There are links to about 80 sites just for them. They can find games and stories; learn about forestry, railroads or the military; they can even sign up to have their name go to Mars. **Rating:** Way cool.

8. America Supports You

www.americasupportsyou.mil

You can almost see the flags waving. This feel-good sight highlights the sacrifices American men and women in uniform make and the people who support them. You can send a message telling how you're supporting the troops. Or join up and find more than 100 ways to lend support. Lots of news, too. It also allows children to take part. **Rating:** Patriotic.



www.my.af.mil

9. Air Force Wives

www.airforcewives.com

Supports Air Force for sure [though the music might drive you nuts]. This is a good place to get the knickknacks that say: "I support you daddy." Send e-cards and buy mementos. Check out their Logo Mania link; it has zillions of logos and patches you can download, for free, and attach to e-mails. **Rating:** Strike up the band.

10. Recreation.gov

www.recreation.gov

Like the name says, it's all about recreation. Find where to go camping, fishing, biking and hiking, to cruise museums or nature trails, watch wildlife — and more. There are links to just



www.dodea.edu

about every recreational area in the country. Plus, there are directions on how to get there. And, of course, there are links for finding things for children to do. **Rating:** Very outdoorsy.



www.afcrossroads.com